



The National Archives and Records Administration

The ELECTRONIC RECORDS ARCHIVES

The Electronic Records Archives

ERA will authentically preserve and provide access to any kind of electronic record, free from dependency on any specific hardware or software enabling NARA to carry out its mission in the future.

Let NARA assume its natural leadership role in the fulfillment of electronic archival and records management projects at this crucial moment in the design of a Government-wide system. I call this entire effort NARA's pursuit of "inside greatness."

-- Allen Weinstein, Archivist of the United States

The Challenge of Electronic Records

- Federal agencies are creating an exponential number of diverse and complex digital records.
- The technology that creates electronic records rapidly becomes obsolete.
- The Federal Government is losing digital data daily.
- No current system exists to preserve digital records over time.

What is An Interactive Electronic Records Archives?

The Archives of the Future will not consist of many buildings scattered across the country. Instead, the Archives of the Future will be available on the desktop of anyone who chooses to explore the records of the United States.

The Need for an ERA System

ERA will provide NARA with the capability of preserving electronic records of continuing growth in volume, complexity, and diversity. ERA will continue to utilize new technologies to **preserve, manage, and provide sustained access** to electronic records. NARA will work to provide standards for transferring new types of records to NARA, ensuring the records are **authentically** preserved and accessible once they are transferred. NARA will continue to support new technologies in order to meet the full end-to-end requirements for ERA.

ERA Benefits Across Government

The ERA system will enable NARA to fulfill its mission in the future. It will also be of direct value to other Federal agencies. ERA will enable NARA to improve its services to other agencies, and it will make it easier for agencies, the Congress, and the President to transfer their electronic records to NARA. Advances in technology stimulated by ERA will also be available to agencies – not only across the Federal Government, but also in state, local, and tribal governments – which need to keep electronic records to fulfill their missions.

ERA Benefits Outside of Government

E-commerce, e-government, manufacturing, research, education, and cultural activities are all hampered by technological obsolescence. Developments in technology make it easier, faster and less expensive to produce, use and share information, but they threaten the survival of information needed in business and other activities. The ERA system will be a catalyst to the development of innovative ways that any institution can use to carry digital information into the future as easily as they can send it around the world today.

ERA program includes three elements. It is responsible for the research partnerships ... it manages the effort to acquire a system which will enable us to manage the lifecycle of electronic records and to preserve them for American citizens ... and it supports business process redesign and change management activities to ensure that NARA and its staff are able to use the ERA system successfully.

***-- L. Reynolds Cahoon, Assistant Archivist for
Human Resources and Information Services***



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ERA Acquisition Approach

ERA's incremental acquisition approach consists of a base contract period for the design of the ERA system followed by five (5) increments for system development.

- **Base Contract Period:** On August 3, 2004, NARA awarded two (2) individual contracts to Harris Corporation and Lockheed Martin for the development of the ERA **system design**. At the end of the base contract period of one (1) year, each competitor will present a system design and working prototype that demonstrates the design in action. NARA will pick the best design and the best team to proceed with developing the ERA system.
- **Five (5) Subsequent Increments (Inc):** The ERA system will be built with each increment building upon the functionality of the previous one.

ERA Program Status

The ERA Program has worked closely with other agencies, universities, archives, libraries, and institutions to develop its vision of the Archives of the Future.

- FY04**
- Congress passed and the President signed a 2004 budget for ERA to support the design competition.
 - NARA published the Requirements Document, Transition Plan, Life Cycle, and Enterprise Architecture.
 - NARA issued a Request for Proposal for the design and development of the ERA system.
 - The Program Management Office implemented a detailed work breakdown structure to track progress.
 - The Program Management Office completed the hiring of experts needed to manage the acquisition.
 - NARA selected two (2) contractors, Harris and Lockheed Martin, to individually develop design specifications for the ERA system during the **Base Contract Period**.
- FY05**
- NARA will select the best design and development team to build ERA.
 - NARA will exercise the first of five (5) increments to develop the system.
- FY06**
- Development of a test version of the **Increment 1** system. Additional funding is required to complete **Increment 1**, allowing NARA, other agencies, and the public to use the ERA system.
- FY07 to 2011**
- **Increment 1**, Initial Operating Capability (**IOC**) in FY07, provides end-to-end functionality for managing, preserving and providing on-line access to NARA's electronic records.
 - Four (4) more annual Increments will be brought online
 - Full Operating Capability (**FOC**) will be achieved in FY 2011

